Annual Records Management Training for Fiscal Year 2017

Alternative Text Version

NOTE: This alternative text version is intended for employees with disabilities that use Assistive Technology. Since completion of text version cannot be automatically tracked, please notify your supervisor once you have read and understood the course, to ensure that you receive proper credit for completing the training.

EPA's Records Management Training

Welcome to EPA's Records Management Training. This course is designed to be an overview for all EPA staff and contractors of basic records management concepts and responsibilities.

This course includes information regarding the 2014 amendments to the Federal Records Act.

- The Federal Records Act, amended in November 2014, defines "electronic messages" as "electronic mail and other electronic messaging systems that are used for purposes of communicating between individuals."
- The 2014 amendments also prohibit federal employees from creating or sending a record using a non-official electronic messaging account unless the employee:
  - copies an official electronic messaging account of the employee in the original creation or transmission of the record; or
  - forwards a complete copy of the record to an official electronic messaging account of the employee no later than 20 days after the original creation or transmission of the record.
- The 2014 amendments also provide for disciplinary action against an Agency officer or employee for an intentional violation of this prohibition.

Introduction to EPA's Records Management Training

This course is divided into six parts and addresses the following questions:

1. What is the National Records Management Program (or NRMP)?
2. Why is records management important?
3. What is a record?
4. Who is responsible for records management?
5. What are the records life-cycle, records schedules, and file plans?; and
6. Where can additional information on records management be found?

By the end of the training, you will be able to answer each of these questions and understand how to manage your EPA records.

This course will take approximately 45 minutes to complete.

After completing the course, please visit the National Records Management Program's website at http://intranet.epa.gov/records for the most up-to-date information on records management at EPA.

Overview of Records Management at EPA

Good records management ensures that you can:

- Comply with the law, which includes the Federal Records Act (as amended), and the Presidential Memorandum - Managing Government Records Directive, 2012;
- Identify the records needed to document your work;
- Minimize duplication of records, allowing you to work more effectively;
- Decrease the costs associated with the storage of electronic and paper documents;
- Keep records accessible to all those who need to use them, therefore improving communications and knowledge-sharing across EPA;
- Eliminate time spent trying to find lost or misfiled records;
- Protect essential (that is, vital) records and information in the event of an emergency or disaster, such as a fire, flood or tornado; and
- Respond quickly and efficiently to document requests such as Freedom of Information Act (or FOIA) requests, litigation-related requests, or Congressional requests.

The National Records Management Program (NRMP)

The National Records Management Program (or NRMP) provides leadership and direction in managing the records that support EPA's mission.

The Agency Records Officer leads the NRMP in accordance with EPA's policy and guidance and federal statutes and regulations. The NRMP is in the Office of Environmental Information (or OEI's) Office of Enterprise Information Programs (or OEIP).

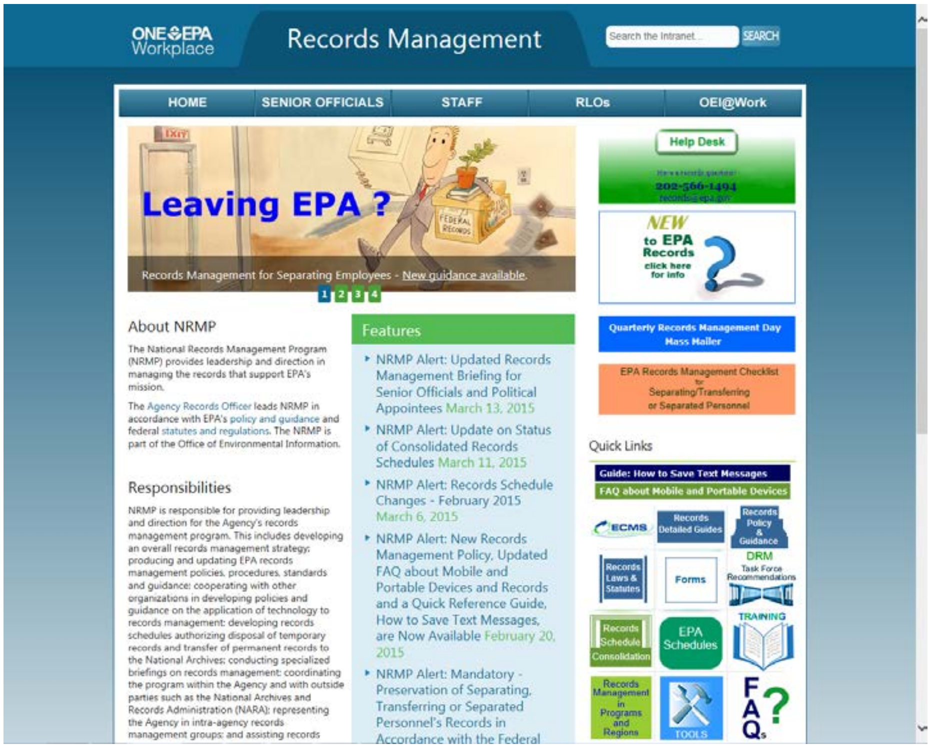
The NRMP is responsible for providing leadership and direction for the Agency's records management program. This includes:

- developing an overall records management strategy;
- producing and updating EPA records management policies, procedures, standards and guidance;
- cooperating with other organizations in developing policies and guidance on the application of technology to records management;
- developing records schedules authorizing disposal of temporary records and transfer of permanent records to the National Archives;
- conducting specialized briefings on records management;
- coordinating the program within the Agency and with outside parties such as the National Archives and Records Administration (or NARA);
- representing the Agency in intra-agency records management groups; and
- assisting records programs across the Agency with advice and technical expertise.

The NRMP provides a wide range of services to EPA records managers and staff, such as:

- developing guidance and training materials to meet the needs of the Agency's records management staff;
- responding to requests for technical assistance on all aspects of records management;
- coordinating communications and networking among records managers Agency-wide;
- promoting improved communications among records managers through meetings, site visits, and conferences; and
- distributing Agency best practices and publications.

NRMP information is available on the intranet at http://www.intranet.epa.gov/records. EPA also maintains a public webpage at www.epa.gov/records. However, because this is intended for those outside EPA, use the intranet pages – they contain more in-depth information geared specifically for EPA staff.


ONE EPA Workplace
Records Management
Search the Intranet...
SEARCH
HOME
SENIOR OFFICIALS
STAFF
RLOs
OEI@Work
Leaving EPA ?
EXIT
FEDERAL RECORDS
1
2
3
4
Help Desk
202-566-1494
records@epa.gov
NEW to EPA Records click here for info
Quarterly Records Management Day Mass Mailer
EPA Records Management Checklist for Separating/Transferring or Separated Personnel
Quick Links
Guide: How to Save Text Messages
FAQ about Mobile and Portable Devices
ECMS
Records Detailed Guides
Records Policy & Guidance
Records Laws & Statutes
Forms
DRM Task Force Recommendations
TRAINING
Records Schedule Consolidation
EPA Schedules
Records Management in Programs and Regions
TOOLS
FAQs

Records Management for Separating Employees - New guidance available.

About NRMP

The National Records Management Program (NRMP) provides leadership and direction in managing the records that support EPA's mission.

The Agency Records Officer leads NRMP in accordance with EPA's policy and guidance and federal statutes and regulations. The NRMP is part of the Office of Environmental Information.

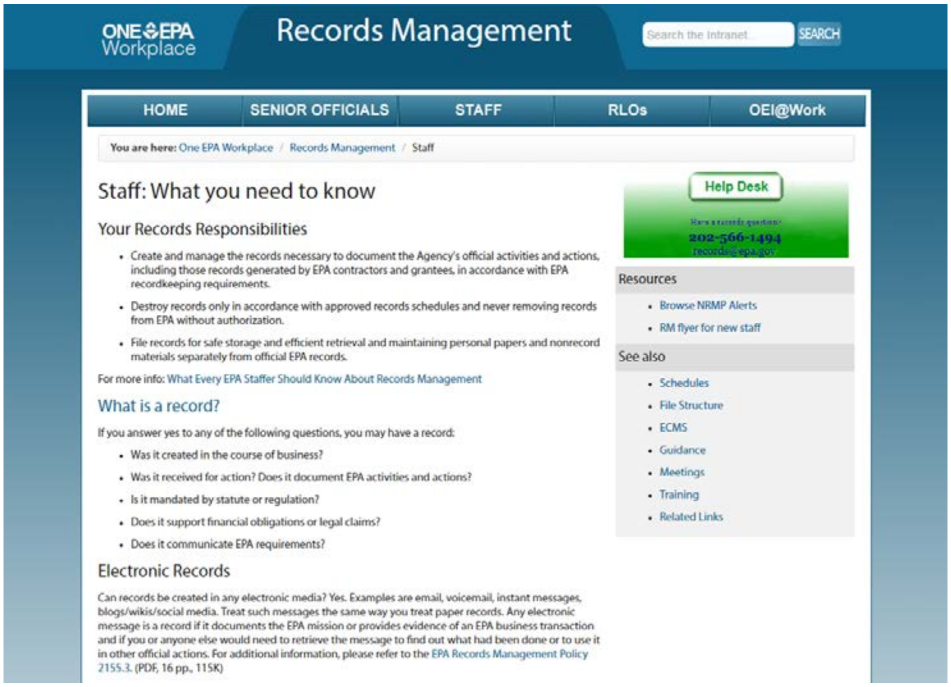
Responsibilities

NRMP is responsible for providing leadership and direction for the Agency's records management program. This includes developing an overall records management strategy; producing and updating EPA records management policies, procedures, standards and guidance; cooperating with other organizations in developing policies and guidance on the application of technology to records management; developing records schedules authorizing disposal of temporary records and transfer of permanent records to the National Archives; conducting specialized briefings on records management; coordinating the program within the Agency and with outside parties such as the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA); representing the Agency in intra-agency records management groups; and assisting records

Features

- NRMP Alert: Updated Records Management Briefing for Senior Officials and Political Appointees March 13, 2015
- NRMP Alert: Update on Status of Consolidated Records Schedules March 11, 2015
- NRMP Alert: Records Schedule Changes - February 2015 March 6, 2015
- NRMP Alert: New Records Management Policy, Updated FAQ about Mobile and Portable Devices and Records and a Quick Reference Guide, How to Save Text Messages, are Now Available February 20, 2015
- NRMP Alert: Mandatory - Preservation of Separating, Transferring or Separated Personnel's Records in Accordance with the Federal

The NRMP home page is a helpful tool for anyone with questions. It contains records guidance, FAQs, tools, current information such as records alerts, links to NARA, and other resources. A link to the Help Desk is at the top right side and a handy guide for new staff is located just below. Under "Quick Links" you will find buttons which will take you to specific EPA topics in records management.


ONE EPA Workplace
Records Management
Search the Intranet
SEARCH
HOME
SENIOR OFFICIALS
STAFF
RLOs
OEI@Work
You are here: One EPA Workplace / Records Management / Staff
Help Desk
202-566-1494
records@epa.gov
Resources
Browse NRMP Alerts
RM flyer for new staff
See also
Schedules
File Structure
ECMS
Guidance
Meetings
Training
Related Links

Staff: What you need to know

Your Records Responsibilities

- Create and manage the records necessary to document the Agency's official activities and actions, including those records generated by EPA contractors and grantees, in accordance with EPA recordkeeping requirements.
- Destroy records only in accordance with approved records schedules and never removing records from EPA without authorization.
- File records for safe storage and efficient retrieval and maintaining personal papers and nonrecord materials separately from official EPA records.

For more info: What Every EPA Staffer Should Know About Records Management

What is a record?

If you answer yes to any of the following questions, you may have a record:

- Was it created in the course of business?
- Was it received for action? Does it document EPA activities and actions?
- Is it mandated by statute or regulation?
- Does it support financial obligations or legal claims?
- Does it communicate EPA requirements?

Electronic Records

Can records be created in any electronic media? Yes. Examples are email, voicemail, instant messages, blogs/wikis/social media. Treat such messages the same way you treat paper records. Any electronic message is a record if it documents the EPA mission or provides evidence of an EPA business transaction and if you or anyone else would need to retrieve the message to find out what had been done or to use it in other official actions. For additional information, please refer to the EPA Records Management Policy 2155.3. (PDF, 16 pp., 115K)

On the Staff page you will find information specifically for EPA staff. The NRMP has tried to provide answers to most questions that staff are likely to have, including records responsibilities, identifying what is a record, etc.

Other pages for Senior Officials and for Records Liaison Officers (or RLOs) contain information more specific to those roles; however, all staff have access to the information.

The NRMP Help Desk can assist with records management questions. Feel free to contact the Help Desk via phone at 202-566-1494, or you may send an email to records@epa.gov.

Knowledge Check 1

The best way to learn about your records management responsibilities is to:

a. Ask your Office Special Assistant;
b. Review the NRMP intranet pages; or
c. Contact your RLO.

The correct answer is b. Review the NRMP intranet pages.

Knowledge Check 2

Who is responsible for managing EPA records?

a. RLOs;
b. Records Contacts;
c. Managers; or
d. All EPA staff.

The correct answer is d. All EPA Staff.

Why is Records Management Important?

Whether you are a contractor or an employee, follow certain basic guidance when managing records.

- Follow EPA and the NARA guidance on records management.
- Manage records in accordance with records retention schedules approved by EPA and NARA, which provide specific instructions on how long to keep records.
- Do not remove or dispose of records created or received during the course of business without approval. If an unauthorized destruction occurs, the incident must be reported to the Agency Records Officer as soon as possible.
- In concert with the November 28, 2011 "Presidential Memorandum - Managing Government Records," EPA is moving towards a "digital first" policy. When possible, electronic records should be managed digitally throughout their life-cycle in an approved electronic recordkeeping system such as Enterprise Content Management System (or ECMS).

Knowledge Check 3

Good records management is important because:

a. It helps you do your job;
b. It lets you share information with others;
c. It allows you to be transparent to the public;
d. It ensures full compliance with laws and regulations;
e. It reduces risks associated with litigation and potential penalties; or
f. All of the above.

The correct answer is f. All of the above.

What is a Record? General Definition

To ensure that everyone is fully aware of what a record is, let us define the term here at the EPA.

A record is an information resource, in any format that:

- is created in the course of business;
- is received for action;
- is needed to document your activities and decisions;
- supports EPA's financial obligations and legal claims; or
- communicates EPA requirements or guidance.

Records may include documentary information in any format, paper or electronic, and in any media, such as:

- spreadsheets;
- textual documents;
- databases;
- photographs and maps;
- text messages;
- instant messages;
- voicemail;
- information on mobile devices;
- documented verbal communications;
- messages created in social media tools or applications; and
- email messages.

No matter what the format, information resources that document your work or decisions for EPA could be considered records.

Of course, it is much easier to understand exactly what a record is by looking at specific examples.

What is a Record? Examples Part 1

Examples of records you create while doing business include:

- Memos or emails outlining work accomplishments or giving someone work directions;
- Documentation about project or program activities;
- Documentation of your activities with organizations, both in and outside EPA;
- EPA contract, grant, acquisition, and other related financial documents related to transactions you approve; and
- Sampling and analytical data files.

What is a Record? Examples Part 2

Examples of records that are received for action include:

- Freedom of Information Act (or FOIA) requests;
- Permit applications;
- Controlled correspondence and public or congressional inquiries;
- Comments received pursuant to Federal Register notices published on proposed rulemakings;
- Accounts payable information, such as invoices for materials purchased or for services provided under contracts;
- Complaints filed from any source, such as those from the general public or within the EPA on waste, fraud and abuse, or discrimination complaints;
- Public comments received on proposed Agency actions other than regulatory actions, such as environmental restoration; and
- Emails and correspondence with individuals outside the Agency about Agency business.

What is a Record? Examples Part 3

Examples of records that document EPA activities and actions include:

- Calendars that document your important meetings and work-related appointments;
- Meeting materials and minutes;
- Recorded video conferences;
- Project reports; and
- Audit reports.

What is a Record? Examples Part 4

Examples of records that might be needed to support financial obligations and legal claims include:

- Grant payouts or proof of expenditures;
- Approval for contract invoices;
- Operations and maintenance expenditures;
- Time and attendance, and associated leave records; and
- Litigation files, including litigation hold notices, court orders, and settlement documents.

What is a Record? Examples Part 5

Examples of records that communicate EPA requirements or guidance include:

- Guidance documents; and
- Policies or procedures issued by your office.

What is a Record? Examples Part 6

The Federal Records Act was amended in November 2014 and now includes a definition for electronic messages in 44 U.S.C. Section 2911.

The law states, "The term 'electronic messages' means electronic mail and other electronic messaging systems that are used for purposes of communicating between individuals."

Electronic messages can include:

- text messaging;
- chat or instant messaging;
- messaging functionality in social media tools or applications;
- voice messaging; and
- similar forms of electronic communication systems.

Electronic messages created or received in the course of business that document Agency activities, actions, or decisions are federal records. Like all federal records, these electronic messages must be managed as records scheduled for disposition based on appropriate records schedules.

Please see NARA Bulletin 2015-02: Guidance on Managing Electronic Messages for more guidance on this topic at https://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/bulletins/2015/2015-02.html.

EPA's Records Policy, available on the NRMP intranet page, states clearly that all official business should first and foremost be done on official EPA information systems (for example, official ".gov" or Agency-approved systems). EPA strongly discourages the use of personal email or other personal electronic messaging systems, including text messaging on a personal mobile device, for sending or receiving Agency records.

The Federal Records Act now prohibits the creation or sending of a federal record using a non-EPA electronic messaging system (such as personal email accounts or personal mobile devices), unless the individual creating or sending the record either:

(1) copies his/her EPA email account at the time of initial creation or transmission of the record; or
(2) forwards a complete copy of the record to his/her EPA email account within 20 days of the initial creation or transmission of the record.

Once the message is sent or forwarded to the EPA messaging system, the record must be saved in an approved EPA electronic records management system, such as the ECMS, using the EZ Email Records tool. When the electronic files have been captured in an approved EPA records management system, they should be removed from non-EPA messaging systems, unless there is a specific obligation (such as a litigation hold) to maintain the files on all systems on which they appear. Users of instant messaging, text messaging, or other transient technologies are responsible for ensuring that messages that result in the creation of a federal record are saved in an Agency-approved recordkeeping system.

The use of personal social media accounts, for example, but not limited to, Facebook and Twitter, is prohibited for conducting EPA business. Information posted to the Internet, intranet, Agency blogs, Agency wikis, and official Agency social networking sites may also be considered records. The same rules apply to these types of information resources as print documents. You must ensure that when such information is considered to be a record, it is captured in an Agency-approved recordkeeping system.

Technologies for electronic records management are constantly evolving. Please visit the National Records Management Program's intranet site at http://intranet.epa.gov/records for the most up to date training and guidance on managing electronic records.

For technical guidance on saving your electronic records, please visit the Enterprise Content Management System's intranet site at http://intranet.epa.gov/ecms/.

For immediate assistance with records management questions, please contact the NRMP Help Desk at records@epa.gov or 202-566-1494. Alternatively, please contact your RLO or visit http://intranet.epa.gov/records/about.htm.

EPA's Records Management Policy can be found at http://www.epa.gov/records/policy/2155/rm_policy_cio_2155-3.pdf.

What is a Record? Examples Part 7

For staff who have been issued Agency mobile or portable devices, note that EPA discourages the use of text messaging to send or receive substantive (or non-transitory) federal records with sufficient value that must be maintained for 180 days (for example, administrative and program records).

However, EPA recognizes that some staff perform time-sensitive work that may, at times, require the creation of substantive records in the form of text messages for emergency or environmental notification purposes.

In these situations, staff must save and manage any text message records from their Agency-issued mobile device related to their work by copying or forwarding the records to their respective EPA email accounts on a regular basis. (It is recommended that you do so within 20 days.)

Please note that text message records created or sent by a non-EPA messaging system, such as a personal mobile device, are required to follow the Federal Records Act and EPA's Records Management Policy as detailed above.

For more information, visit the FAQ on Mobile and Portable Devices, and Records at http://www.epa.gov/records/faqs/pda.htm.

Instructions on how to save text messages from your Agency-issued mobile device into an EPA-approved recordkeeping system can be found at http://intranet.epa.gov/mobiledevices/pdf/Instructions-Saving-Text-Messages.pdf.

Once you forward a text message record to your email account, it is available to be searched within your email for future document requests. You must also forward to your email account any non-record text messages responsive to a FOIA or other document request that are still available at the time you are notified of the request. These messages, once in the EPA's email system, are then available for information searches and collections in response to FOIA requests, congressional inquiries, or litigation. If you have any text messages responsive to a document request which have not been forwarded to your EPA email account (for example, they are non-records or are less than 20 days old), you must forward these messages to your email account and coordinate with the office in charge of the document request to ensure those responsive messages are identified and collected.

What is a Record? Examples Part 8

Not everything is considered to be a record. "Non-records" are information resources that do not provide evidence of your activities or decisions. Non-records may not be required to be retained according to EPA records schedules; however, they could be subject to other retention requirements such as litigation holds or FOIA requests.

Examples of possible non-records include:

- Extra copies of technical publications kept only for reference;
- Copies of articles from professional journals;
- Convenience copies of directives or any other document being maintained as a record by the originating office; and
- All-hands email messages you receive informing you of activities in your building.

Pursuant to federal law and Agency policy, non-records must be kept separate from records. Destroy non-records when they are no longer needed and are not subject to a FOIA request, litigation hold, or congressional inquiry.

"Personal papers" (both paper and electronic) are not considered to be records. Personal papers are unrelated to your work at EPA and, therefore, not owned by the Agency. Like non-records, they are excluded from the definition of a record and must be maintained separately from records.

Examples of personal papers include:

- Materials brought into the workplace by employees from previous jobs, or from home, such as sports schedules and league activities;
- Information from personal involvement in non-Agency sponsored professional associations and conferences; or
- Any other information related solely to an individual's private affairs, including personal, non-work emails exchanged between EPA employees.

However, be careful with personal planners and calendars. They may be considered a record if they are used to document substantive Agency activities and actions.

The FAQ page on Personal Papers can be found at http://intranet.epa.gov/records/faqs/personal.html.

What is a Record? Examples Part 9

"Working files" can be records or non-records. They include rough notes, calculations, or preliminary drafts that are used to prepare or analyze other documents.

They may be records when:

- A records schedule specifically requires the retention of the documents;
- They significantly add to the understanding of an important subject or issue;
- They are circulated to other staff for official comment or review; or
- They document the formulation and execution of basic policies, decisions, actions, or responsibilities.

They may be non-records when:

- They are not circulated to staff for approval, comment, action, or recommendation;
- They do not contain unique information, such as substantive annotations or comments that add to the understanding of the Agency's decisions or actions;
- They are not needed to document a decision-making process; or
- Their retention is not covered by an Agency-wide or EPA organization-specific requirement.

To determine whether your file is a record or not, please use the NRMP's "What is a Record?" tool, at http://intranet.epa.gov/records/whatis/index.html.

What is a Record? Examples Part 10

There are certain types of records that are sensitive and require special handling. Sensitive records include those that are categorized as Controlled Unclassified Information (or CUI) or contain Personally Identifiable Information (or PII), some of which are covered under the Privacy Act. CUI is unclassified information that meets the standards for safeguarding and dissemination controls pursuant to law, regulations, and government-wide policies under Executive Order 13556.

For more information on CUI, please visit http://www.archives.gov/cui.

PII is any information about an individual that is maintained by an agency, which can be used to distinguish, trace, or identify an individual's identity, including personal information, which is linked or linkable to an individual. Examples of PII include name, home address, personal telephone number, date of birth, mother's maiden name, and many other types of information that can identify an individual.

EPA has three categories of sensitive PII. These categories of information present the highest risk of harm to individuals if compromised and include Social Security numbers, as well as medical and financial information. Sensitive PII requires additional levels of protection.

Records that contain PII must be appropriately managed, safeguarded, and when appropriate, destroyed with caution by shredding, pulping, or burning at final disposition.

The loss or unauthorized disclosure of PII or sensitive PII must immediately be reported to the EPA Call Center at 1-866-411-4372, Option 1.

For more information on PII, please visit: http://intranet.epa.gov/privacy.

Knowledge Check 4

Employees and contractors should refrain, if possible, from conducting EPA business on non-EPA information systems, that is, personal email accounts, personal mobile devices, etc.

a. True; or
b. False

The correct answer is a. True. All federal agencies, including EPA, are accountable to the public. The use of non-EPA information systems is strongly discouraged. In the rare situation when a non-EPA information system is used to create or send a federal record, staff must forward or carbon-copy the electronic messages or electronic files to their EPA email account at the time of initial creation or transmission of the record, or within 20 days of the initial creation or transmission of the record, and then save the record in an Agency-approved recordkeeping system.

Knowledge Check 5

The three EPA categories of sensitive PII are:

a. Personal Identifiers, Social Security numbers and financial information;
b. Social Security numbers, date of birth and home address or phone number;
c. Social Security numbers and medical and financial information; or
d. Medical and financial Information and benefit information.

The correct answer is c. Although all of the choices listed contain examples of PII, the three EPA categories of sensitive PII are listed under item c. Social Security numbers and medical and financial information.

Knowledge Check 6

Choose the option that creates a true statement.

CUI is the acronym for:

a. Classified User Information;
b. Certified Unclassified Information; or
c. Controlled Unclassified Information.

The correct answer is c. Controlled Unclassified Information.

Knowledge Check 7

All of the following are records that must be maintained:

- calendars that contain substantive information regarding daily activities;
- FOIA requests;
- judicial complaints; and
- email from an outside Agency about EPA business.

a. True; or
b. False

The correct answer is a. True. All are examples of records.

Knowledge Check 8

Which of the following can be records that must be maintained?

a. databases;
b. photographs and maps;
c. instant messages and text messages;
d. extra copies of publications;
e. documented verbal communications;
f. all of the above;
g. a, b and c; or
h. a, b, c and e.

The correct answer is h. a, b, c and e. Records may exist in any format and in any media.

Who is Responsible for Records Management?

Within the EPA's records management program, there are key players who hold important roles and responsibilities. These roles include:

- The NRMP Agency Records Officer, who is responsible for providing leadership and direction for EPA's records management programs;
- Records Liaison Officers, who are responsible for their respective Program's or Region's records management programs;

- Records contacts who work closely with their office staff and their Program's or Region's RLO; and
- You – all EPA employees who are responsible for the creation, receipt, management, and preservation of records in their day-to-day activities. As the people closest to records, you are the most important part of the EPA's compliance with the Agency's records management responsibilities.

Who is Responsible for Records Management? All EPA Staff and Contractors

Every person who works for the Agency is responsible for:

- Creating and managing the records necessary to document the Agency's official activities and actions, in accordance with EPA recordkeeping requirements;
- Destroying records only in accordance with approved records schedules and when the records have been cleared from all other preservation requirements, and never removing records from EPA without authorization;
- Maintaining personal papers and non-record materials separately from official EPA records;
- Filing records for safe storage and efficient retrieval, should they be subject to an information request;
- Ensuring records that are subject to a litigation hold are identified and preserved;
- Completing EPA Form 3110-49 – *EPA Records Management Checklist for Separating/Transferring or Separated Personnel* and transferring all paper and electronic records to management or a designee prior to a transfer to another position within EPA or separation from EPA; and
- Not removing records or other work material without prior approval. There may be criminal penalties for unauthorized removal or destruction of records.

Records are documents that you create or receive that demonstrate your activities or decisions on behalf of the EPA. They are government property and belong to EPA. EPA employees and contractors do not maintain any personal ownership over the records they create or receive on behalf of the EPA and are merely custodians of the records on behalf of the federal government.

Remember, there may be criminal penalties for unauthorized removal or destruction of records.

Knowledge Check 9

All EPA employees are responsible for:

a. Completing EPA Form 3110-49 - *EPA Records Management Checklist for Separating/Transferring or Separated Personnel* and transferring records to management or a designee upon transferring to a new position within EPA or separating from the Agency;
b. Filing records for safe storage and efficient retrieval;
c. Creating records documenting their activities and decisions; or
d. All of the above

The correct answer is d. All of the above.

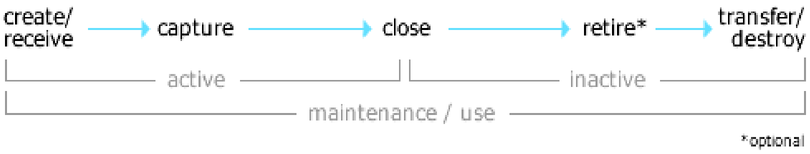
Knowledge Check 10

As an EPA employee, or contractor or grantee with access to EPA systems, I am responsible for maintaining which of the following as an EPA record:

a. Correspondence with a state or federal employee about an EPA action;
b. Guidance I prepared and circulated to my coworkers for comment;
c. An email that I sent or received related to my job at EPA that documents Agency activities, actions or decisions; or
d. All of the above.

The correct answer is d. All of the above.

The Records Life-cycle



The records life-cycle begins with the knowledge that you must document an activity or decision.

Let's define a few key terms:

Create – Ensure the accuracy and integrity of documentation created and transmitted within the Agency and among agencies.

Maintenance and Use – Establish and implement standards and procedures for classifying, indexing, and filing records.

Disposition – Actions taken regarding records no longer needed for current government business.

You must capture records that you create or receive in an approved recordkeeping system. At this point, the record is needed to conduct current Agency business and is called an "active record."

Recordkeeping systems are constantly evolving. Please visit the National Records Management Program's intranet site at http://intranet.epa.gov/records for the latest information, including updated training and guidance.

All records reach a point when they are no longer needed for current business. At this stage the record is considered "inactive" and is "closed," which means no more information will be added to it and you may have the option of retiring it to off-site storage, such as a Federal Records Center.

At the end of its life-cycle, the record reaches its final disposition, which means it is either destroyed or transferred, according to the records schedule. A temporary record is destroyed. A permanent record is transferred to NARA.

Records Schedules and File Plans

A record is either "permanent," and eventually transferred to the National Archives, or "temporary" (also called "disposable") and eventually destroyed or deleted at the end of its life-cycle. Some temporary records are transitory in nature. Transitory records have a retention of less than 180 days, and can be destroyed as soon as they are no longer needed for business purposes if there is no other preservation requirement. A records schedule is developed by the NRMP in conjunction with a Program or Region's RLO. It is then reviewed and concurred on by the Office of General Counsel (or OGC) and the Office of the Inspector General (or OIG) before being submitted to NARA for approval. It provides mandatory instructions on how long to keep different types of records and what to do with them after they are no longer needed for current EPA business.

A records schedule also provides additional information, including:

- The unique assigned number of the schedule, and the disposition authority number issued by NARA;
- Which program and location can use the records schedule;
- A description of the records that are covered by the records schedule;
- Guidance on how to apply the schedule; and
- Disposition instructions which provide information on how long to keep records and what to do when the approved retention period is over.

A well-planned and well-documented file plan can be developed at a high level, such as the Program or Regional level, down to an individual staff level. It should be a complete listing of all of the types of information created, received, and/or maintained by staff with the appropriate records schedules and disposition items identified. It describes all records and non-records, and provides instructions for determining when they are closed and how long to keep them afterward. File plans are a handy reference for staff and should also include the locations and custodians of all of your office's records.

If you have any questions regarding your specific records, please consult with your RLO or visit http://intranet.epa.gov/records/about.htm.

Knowledge Check 11

A records schedule:

a. Shows if and when a record should be destroyed;
b. Is an inventory of all records of the same category;
c. Describes a group of records and tells how long they must be kept; or
d. Both a and c

The correct answer is d. Both a and c.

Knowledge Check 12

After a period of time described in the records schedules, permanent records are transferred to NARA.

a. True; or
b. False

The correct answer is a. True.

Maintenance and Use of Electronic Records

An email message is a record if it meets the definition of a federal record.

The term "record" includes recorded information, regardless of form or characteristics, made or received by a federal agency under federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business, and preserved or appropriate for preservation by that agency or its legitimate successor as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the United States government, or because of the informational value of data in them.

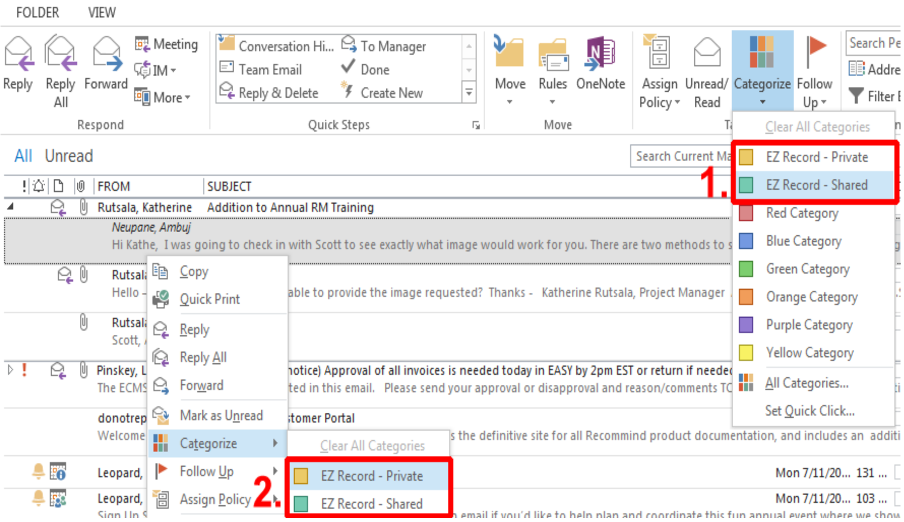
Employees must apply the definition of a record to email messages and determine whether they merit retention as records.

All employees are responsible for preserving their email records created through the course of Agency business. You should use the EZ Email Records tool to tag all emails that qualify as a record.

Email messages are subject to the requirements of FOIA requests, and release of email messages is subject to the same FOIA exemptions that apply to other Agency records.

EZ Email Records is a tool that enables you to save your emails as records. It is integrated directly into your EPA email applications: Outlook and the Outlook Web Application (or OWA) for current email, and Lotus Notes for legacy email. EZ Email Records simplifies saving email records with a one-step process.

EZ Email Records facilitates email records management, and the use of an enterprise recordkeeping repository reduces the need to print and store paper records, reducing storage costs. Emails that are not federal records do not need to be saved into ECMS using the EZ Email Records tool. Delete emails that are not records when no longer of use, unless they are subject to a separate preservation requirement such as a legal hold, an audit, or a pending FOIA or congressional request.



There are two options to save an email record from Microsoft Outlook using EZ Email Records:

(1) Click on the email you want to save as a record, then click "Categorize" on the Ribbon; or
(2) Right-click on the message, then hover over the "Categorize" choice. Choose whether you want to save the record as "Private" or "Shared" in ECMS.

For more information about EZ Email Records, please visit http://intranet.epa.gov/ecms/emailrecords/.

Knowledge Check 13

The EZ Email Records tool enables you to save emails as records with a simple, one-step process, and it is integrated directly into Outlook, the OWA, and Lotus Notes.

a. True; or
b. False.

The correct answer is a. True.

Knowledge Check 14

What should I do with an email that is not a record?

a. Save it in EZ Email Records;
b. Delete it; or
c. Check whether the email is subject to a litigation hold, FOIA request, or congressional inquiry; if it is not, delete it.

The correct answer is c. All documents may be subject to a litigation hold, even non-records. Check to make sure you are not subject to a current litigation hold before deleting an email. Records responsive to a pending FOIA request should not be deleted.

Additional Information on Records Management

Additional information about managing EPA records is available online at http://intranet.epa.gov/records. As records technologies evolve, please visit this website for the latest information, including updated training and guidance. This website also includes links to 'RLOs' contact information (see http://intranet.epa.gov/records/about.htm) and to all EPA's records schedules (see http://intranet.epa.gov/records/schedule/index.htm). For immediate assistance with records management questions, please contact the NRMP Help Desk at records@epa.gov or 202-566-1494. Alternatively, please contact your RLO.

For technical guidance on saving electronic records, visit the Enterprise Content Management System's intranet page at http://intranet.epa.gov/ecms.

Conclusion

This concludes this year's training on records management. The training answered the following questions:

1. Why is records management important?
2. What is a record?
3. Who is responsible for records management?
4. What is the National Records Management Program (NRMP)?
5. What are the records life-cycle, records schedules and file plans?; and
6. Where can additional information on records management be found?

We hope you enjoyed learning about records management!

Test Question 1

Good records management is important because:

a. It helps you do your job;
b. It lets you share information with others;
c. It allows you to be transparent to the public;
d. It ensures full compliance with laws and regulations;
e. It reduces risks associated with litigation and potential penalties; or
f. All of the above.

The correct answer is f. All of the above.

Test Question 2

Employees and contractors should refrain, if possible, from conducting EPA business on non-EPA information systems, that is, personal email accounts, personal mobile devices, etc.

a. True; or
b. False

The correct answer is a. True.

Test Question 3

The three EPA categories of sensitive PII are:

a. Personal Identifiers, Social Security numbers and financial information;
b. Social Security numbers, date of birth and home address or phone number;
c. Social Security numbers and medical and financial information; or
d. Medical and financial Information and benefit information.

The correct answer is c. Social Security numbers and medical and financial information.

Test Question 4

Choose the option that creates a true statement.

CUI is the acronym for:

a. Classified User Information;
b. Certified Unclassified Information; or
c. Controlled Unclassified Information.

The correct answer is c. Controlled Unclassified Information.

Test Question 5

All of the following are records that must be maintained:

- Calendars that contain substantive information regarding daily activities
- FOIA requests
- Judicial complaints
- Email from an outside Agency about EPA business

a. True; or
b. False

The correct answer is a. True, all are examples of records.

Test Question 6

Which of the following can be records that must be maintained?

a. databases;
b. photographs and maps;
c. instant messages and text messages;
d. extra copies of publications;
e. documented verbal communications;
f. all of the above;
g. a, b and c; or
h. a, b, c and e.

The correct answer is h. a, b, c and e.

Test Question 7

All EPA employees are responsible for:

a. Completing EPA Form 3110-49 - *EPA Records Management Checklist for Separating/Transferring or Separated Personnel* and transferring records to management or a designee upon transferring to a new position within EPA or separating from the Agency;
b. Filing records for safe storage and efficient retrieval;
c. Creating records documenting their activities and decisions; or
d. All of the above

The correct answer is d. All of the above.

Test Question 8

As an EPA employee, or contractor or grantee with access to EPA systems, I am responsible for maintaining which of the following as an EPA record:

a. Correspondence with a state or federal employee about an EPA action;
b. Guidance I prepared and circulated to my coworkers for comment;
c. An email that I sent or received related to my job at EPA that documents Agency activities, actions or decisions; or
d. All of the above.

The correct answer is d. All of the above.

Test Question 9

A records schedule:

a. Is an inventory of all records of the same category;
b. Provides mandatory instructions on how long to keep different types of records and what to do with them after they are no longer needed for current EPA business;
c. Describes which programs and locations can use each schedule; or
d. Both b and c.

The correct answer is d. Both b and c.

Test Question 10

After a period of time described in the records schedules, permanent records are transferred to NARA.

a. True; or
b. False

The correct answer is a. True.

Test Question 11

You are an EPA employee with an Agency-issued mobile device. You send out a text from your Agency-issued mobile device to your colleague to inform him that you are running late for a meeting. Which, if any, of the following texts would you forward to your email with contextual information and save as a record? Check all that apply.

a. "I'm 5 minutes behind";
b. "I'll be late, but I concur with the current plan to move forward with the contract"; or
c. "I'll be late."

The correct answer is b. The informational value of the message in option b extends beyond the meeting's time-frame, to document EPA staff decisions or actions. As such, this message is a substantive (or non-transitory) federal record and should be copied or forwarded to your EPA email account and then saved into an approved EPA electronic records management system. EPA discourages the use of text messaging for sending or receiving substantive (or non-transitory) Agency records.

For options a and c, the record value of the messages is only to the participants in the meeting who might be wondering where you are, and thus there is no long term value of the messages that requires preservation beyond the start of the meeting. These messages are transitory records.

Course Complete

Congratulations! You have completed EPA's Annual Records Management Training for fiscal year 2017. Please notify your manager that you have completed the Alternative Text version of this training.